

Second Reformed Dutch Church
(Fair Street Reformed Dutch Church)
209 Fair Street
Kingston
Ulster County
New York

HABS No. NY-5569

HABS,
NY,
56 - KING,
24 -

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY HABS No. NY-5569

SECOND REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH
(Fair Street Reformed Dutch Church)

Location: 209 Fair Street, Kingston, Ulster County, New York
Latitude 41°55'53" Longitude 74°01'05"

Present Owners: Elders and Deacons of the Fair Street Reformed
Dutch Church

Present Occupant: Fair Street Reformed Dutch Church

Significance: This is a fine example of a mid-nineteenth century
Gothic Revival church built prior to the more
typical exuberant Victorian Gothic features.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: The church's cornerstone was laid in the
spring of 1850. It was dedicated on October 7, 1852.
2. Architect: Thomas Thomas, Jr. of 304 Broadway, Kingston,
New York.
3. Original and subsequent owners:
1850 Deed: 2 September 1850 Recorded: 16 November 1850
Liber 77, page 347
Marius Schoonmaker
Elizabeth Schoonmaker, his wife

to

The Elders and Deacons of the Second Reformed Protestant
Dutch Church of Kingston

In 1883 the corporate name was changed to Fair Street
Reformed Dutch Church.

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: Not known.
5. Original plan and construction: The architect's original plan called for a brick building with a wooden cornice and a tin roof. In March 1850, the consistory of the church changed the plan to have cut stone from ground level to just above the water table. In May of the same year the consistory further voted to change the material for the building from brick to stone, and to use slate for the roof. On January 6, 1851 the consistory once again altered the plans, authorizing the cornice also to be of cut stone. Originally, a fifty-foot wooden spire was built on top of the tower. The stone for the building is local dolomite limestone from a quarry on upper Pearl Street, Kingston, New York.
6. Alterations and Additions: On March 17, 1850 a heavy wind blew over the spire, "which had been improperly secured by the builder". It was not replaced. The reredos and the chancel have been altered several times. The stained glass originally in the building was removed by the Reverend Frank B. Seeley in the early twentieth century. During the summer of 1934, the roof was replaced. An outbuilding to the south of the church was recently built.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

The Second Reformed Dutch Church was organized on January 9, 1849. Its members largely came from the First Reformed Dutch Church of Kingston, New York.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Original architectural drawings: Architect Thomas Thomas Jr.'s drawings are in possession of the Fair Street Reformed Dutch Church, Kingston, New York.
2. Old views:
 - a. The church owns two renderings done by the architect, Thomas Thomas, Jr. in circa 1849. One shows the "Principal Facade of the Second Reformed Dutch Church, Kingston, New York" and the other shows a "Side Elevation" (north elevation). Both renderings include the original spire which was destroyed in a storm in 1850. Included in the HABS collection.

- b. A photocopy shows the church's altar as decorated for its first Easter Sunday, circa 1853. Included in the HABS collection.
 - c. A photocopy shows the new organ installed in the altar in 1888. It dates from between 1888 and 1925. Included in the HABS collection.
 - d. A photocopy shows the church's reredos as it existed from 1925 to 1946. The year "1945" is written below the photocopy. Included in the HABS collection.
3. Bibliography:
- a. Primary and unpublished sources:

Consistory Records, Fair Street Reformed Dutch Church, Kingston, New York.

Deeds, County Clerk's Office, Ulster County Office Building, Kingston, New York.
 - b. Secondary and published sources:

Church Bulletins, 1913-72, Fair Street Reformed Dutch Church, Kingston, New York.

The Fair Street Reformed Church, Kingston, New York, One Hundredth Anniversary, 1849-1949. Kingston, New York, 1949.

Schoonmaker, Marius. Historical Sketch of the Second Reformed Dutch Church of Kingston. Kingston, New York, 1879.

Sylvester Nathaniel Bartlett. History of Ulster County. Philadelphia, 1880.

Prepared by William C. Badger
Historian
Historic American Buildings
Survey
Summer 1972

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This is a good example of a simple nineteenth century Gothic Revival church before the more flamboyant high Victorian period.
2. Condition of the fabric: The church is in good condition although its interior is much altered.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: This Gothic Revival building is rectangular in plan and is three bays wide and six bays long. It is two stories with a basement and a bell tower.
2. Foundation: The foundation is stone.
3. Wall construction, finish and color: The church has striated gray limestone walls embellished with subtle Gothic decoration.
4. Structural system, framing: The church's structural system consists of stone bearing walls with set-back buttresses. There are heavy wooden trusses in the attic and decorative exposed hammer beam truss in the nave. Cast-iron columns with ornate capitals support nave floor and similar ones are used to support the balcony at the rear of the nave.
5. Porch and stairs: There are no porches, however, there is a Gothic arcade that has been built at the apsidal end of the building. A modern stairway with metal railing leads from the main entrance to Fair Street.
6. Chimneys: Two exist above the roof line today, however, formerly there were four, two on either side of the nave, that were concealed by running the flues through the buttresses. Three have now been blocked off.
7. Openings:
 - a. Door: The front door is wood, paneled with Gothic motifs. The two leaves are set in a Gothic pointed arch with a hood mold.

- b. Windows and shutters: Lancet windows on front are large and patterned after the thirteenth century Early English lancet windows with Y-tracery. The side windows are similar. All windows of this type have diamond patterned translucent panes and all have stone hood molds on the exterior. The windows are divided into three sections horizontally by Gothic saddle bars. Windows in the basement are Gothic arched with clear panes.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: A gable roof over the nave is covered with seamed tin as is the apsidal appendage.
- b. Bell tower: The bell tower rises directly over the front door and is about twice the height of the nave of the church. In addition to the Gothic doorway and large window it has stepped angle buttresses and horizontal banding as well as three lozenges as stone decoration. The front lozenge was originally intended to contain a stone bas-relief but today contains the construction date of the church. Originally the tower had a conical steeple approximately the height of the nave, making it extremely dominant in the composition. It is now flat-roofed after the top windows and finished with a simple stone cavetto cornice. The bell is from Meneely's foundry, West Troy, New York and was made in 1850. The top story of the tower contain four Y-tracery windows which are louvered.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans

- a. Basement: The basement consists of a large room with iron columns directly under the nave of the church. It is presently used as an auditorium. On the front of the church are two stair halls on either side and a center room used for storage. These are placed directly under the narthex of the church. To the rear of the church is a large kitchen and beyond that classrooms on either side of a central corridor. From the corridor, a door leads straight back into a concrete block addition where the heating equipment is kept. A passageway placed about the center of the auditorium leads to a modern classroom addition.

- b. First Floor: A flight of steps on the front leads to the bell tower and into the narthex of the church which is approximately square in plan. On either side of this room, large stair halls allow passage upward to the balcony and downward to the basement. Immediately in front of the narthex is a wainscoted screen of Gothic design. The nave itself is five bays long with a raised dias and a wooden altar rail of paneled Gothic design. A large Gothic arch is placed at the rear end of the church containing a modern Gothic reredos. Almost one bay deep and running the entire length of the church on the front side is a balcony supported by ornate cast iron columns. The sloping balcony has a wooden rail of Gothic motifs and nineteenth century turned balusters. The balcony is reached by upper stair halls on either side of the church. The space between the stair halls is the large volume of the bell tower from which a large interior window of Gothic design and translucent glass draws light from the outside window to illuminate the balcony. On either side of the reredos are two doors, one of which leads to the organ chamber, the other goes to a room once used as a minister's study but now as a preparation room. Behind that room is a brick Gothic arcade.
- c. Attic: The attic is inaccessible except from the bell tower.
2. Stairways: The stairs to the balcony and basement are open wooden stairs with banisters which gently curve within the anteroom on either side of the narthex. Other stairs in tower are open, rustic and without banisters.
 3. Flooring: The entire first floor is carpeted except for the stairs and the upper stair hall which are wood with large planks. The basement floors are asphalt tile.
 4. Wall and ceiling finish: The church walls are plastered brick walls with institutional colors. The ceiling is wood in the church but is seamed tin in the basement auditorium.
 5. Doorways and Doors: Doors in the narthex are Gothic arched with trefoil tracery and are paneled.
 6. Decorative trim: The wainscot in the nave is simple vertical boards with a molding just below the windows. Interior window molding in the nave is a hollow chamfer painted gold. The molding around the drop arch at the apse of the church is similar. Most other trim and paneling include Gothic cusps as does the ornamental hammer-beam interior truss.

7. Hardware: There are large brass knots of simple design on the entrance. Smaller knobs of similar design are on the narthex doors.
8. Mechanical equipment:
 - a. Heating: The church is heated by an oil burning furnace.
 - b. Lighting: Incandescent lights hang on chains in the nave. They appear to be a Gothic variety of modern design. Other incandescent lights light the other areas of the church and the recreation rooms. Outside lights on stone pedestal are particularly noteworthy.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The church faces east on the southwest corner of Fair and Pearl Streets. It is set well back from Pear Street and unobstructed along the length of the facade.
2. Outbuildings: An addition of fairly recent construction has been added to the church on the south of the structure. The church's parsonage is located near the apse of the church facing Pear Street.
3. Walk: There is a connecting walk between the steps and the street on the front.

Prepared by William C. Badger
Historian
Historic American Buildings
Survey
Summer 1972

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

The project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) under joint sponsorship of the National Park Service and the Kingston Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission with financial assistance from the New York Council on the Arts. Measured and drawn during the summer of 1972 under the direction of John Poppeliers, chief of HABS and under the supervision of Roy Eugene Graham (University of Texas at Austin) by student architects Philip D. Ward (University of Washington), A. Carol Boerder (University of Texas at Austin), M. Morgan Gick (University of Notre Dame), and Stephen O. Fildes (Texas Tech University). The drawings were edited in December 1972 by architect John Burns. The written architectural and historical data was prepared by William C. Badger (University of Pennsylvania), the project historian, and edited in January 1980 by Susan McCown, a historian in the HABS office. The photos were taken in August 1973 by Jack E. Boucher of HABS staff.

ADDENDUM TO:
SECOND REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH
(Fair Street Reformed Dutch Church)
209 Fair Street
Kingston
Ulster County
New York

HABS NY-5569
NY,56-KING,24-

PAPER COPIES OF COLOR TRANSPARENCIES

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001